6 Eng. Poetry vol 4th. K

LEONORA,

AN

ELEGY

ON THE

DEATH of a YOUNG LADY.

Flebilis indignos, Elegeïa, ſolve capillos;
Ah nimis ex vero nunc tibi nomen erit!

OVID.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Loſs of a very amiable young Lady, at an early Period of Life, for whom the Author had conceived the tendereſt Eſteem, occaſioned the following Stanzas; which demand the Reader's utmoſt Indulgence, being the wild Effuſions of diſappointed Love, *and of ſorrowing* Friendſhip.

ADVERTISEMENT.

LEONORA,

AN

ELEGY.

I.

HOW vain! to think that PLEASURE moſt refin'd
Thro' LIFE's fantaſtic Viſion can remain,
How vain! to hope that VIRTUE here confin'd
Will all its cloudleſs Luſtre long retain.

II.

Shou'd VIRTUE's Beams warm ſome diſtinguiſh'd Soul,
On Earth, alas! how tranſient is its Stay:
Scorning indignant VICE's rude Controul;
It flies to Realms of brighter, purer Day.

III.

Yet LOVE, and FRIENDSHIP ſure the Loſs muſt grieve;
The Tear, a Tribute to our Grief! muſt flow:
Still can the plaintive MUSE oft-time relieve,
With ſoothing Strains, the Heart oppreſs'd by WOE.

IV.

Twice has the SUMMER cloath'd theſe Meads with green,
And WINTER robb'd them twice of their Array;
Since LEONORA chear'd this ſadden'd Scene,
And taught the fleeting MOMENTS to be gay.

V.

While bright-ey'd YOUTH yet bade her Spirits flow,
While BEAUTY's Tints were on her Cheeks diſplay'd:
DEATH unrelenting ſtruck the fatal Blow;
And ſeiz'd his VICTIM, my lamented MAID!

VI.

What Guilt, STERN TYRANT! caus'd thee to deſtroy
Charms that had juſt, but juſt attain'd their Prime?
Why blaſt a PARENT's Hope, a LOVER's Joy?
Why urge with fatal Speed the Shaft of TIME?

VII.

Clos'd are thoſe Eyes, whoſe ELOQUENCE reveal'd
The genuine Feelings of the faithful Breaſt;
Eternal SILENCE has for ever ſeal'd
Thoſe Lips, which late ſweet Harmony poſſeſt:

VIII.

How cold is now that ſympathizing Heart,
Which bled ſo oft at SORROW's ſoft Diſtreſs;
The tender Wiſh no more ſhall it impart,
No more ſhall WANT its friendly Warmth confeſs.

IX.

Each rich Endowment of the perfect Soul
Was LEONORA's; Hers each winning Grace;
Hers were thoſe ſocial VIRTUES, that controul
By Laws of gentleſt Kind the HUMAN RACE.

X.

The choiceſt Gifts, that NATURE cou'd beſtow,
On her were laviſh'd—in her poliſh'd Mind
Each native Spark, that GENIUS taught to glow,
Fair EDUCATION brighten'd and refin'd.

XI.

Let CYNIC PRIDE, with vain Conceit, pretend
That in the Female Breaſt WORTH ne'er abides;
Let it the Convent's fraudful Gloom commend,
And there ſuppoſe cold CHASTITY reſides.

XII.

The cloiſter'd NUN, within her hallow'd Cell,
May lift devout her dewy Eyes to HEAV'N;
May Vigils keep, and in Retirement dwell;
But ſtill careſs that SIN ſhe prays forgiv'n.

XIII.

Not blameful thus were LEONORA's Fires:
Her Boſom felt AFFECTION's warmeſt Ray;
It felt the Force of PASSIONS, and DESIRES;
Yet Theſe ſubdued to REASON's rightful Sway.

XIV.

At early Dawn how oft we trod the Mead
With Dew impearl'd, or ſtray'd beſide yon Stream;
Oft to the Shelter of the mid-wood Shade
We fled, to ſhun the Noon-tide's ſultry Beam.

XV.

When Eve had wrapt with duſky Veil the Sky,
And ſtol'n th' expiring Landſcape from our View;
What time her Hand-maid, Cynthia, might be nigh,
To weave with ſilv'ry Brede her Mantle's blue:

XVI.

To yon lov'd Bow'rs how oft we bent our Walk,
Inhaling Fragrance from each rural Sweet;
While the light Minutes were beguil'd with Talk,
While the fond Violets kiſs'd our wand'ring Feet.

XVII.

As o'er each bliſsful Haunt we wont to roam,
Far from Ambition's Throng, and public Strife:
Much we convers'd of Happiness to come;
And plann'd the Scheme of calm, domeſtic Life.

XVIII.

XVIII.

Oh! whither, whither fled thoſe ſocial HOURS;
When DALLIANCE wantonn'd thro' the Paths of EASE,
When ſmiling PLEASURE ſtrew'd my Way with Flow'rs,
And CARE lay huſh'd within the Arms of PEACE?

XIX.

Return, return ye HOURS! that now forſake,
Dear PARTNER of thoſe ſocial HOURS return!
Romantic Wiſh!—Can SORROW's Voice awake
The ſleeping Aſhes of the FRIEND we mourn?

XX.

Each fairy Proſpect fades upon the Eye,
That EXPECTATION pictur'd late ſo gay;
E'en now the bliſsful, ſweet DELUSIONS die;
To MEM'RY ſtill their Raptures they diſplay.

XXI.

Ere long, I hop'd that HYMEN might unite
Two Hearts that burn'd with PASSION's pureſt Blaze;
Might crown our SUMMER with ſerene Delight;
And ſhed Content upon our WINTRY DAYS:

XXII.

But fled are all thoſe long-expected Joys,
Thoſe heart-felt Joys! which ſoon I meant to prove:
DEATH FANCY's golden, diſtant Dream deſtroys;
Nor heeds th' Endearments of a mutual LOVE.

XXIII.

Far other Bliſs now LEONORA knows,
In Regions! which alone the BLEST explore;
In happier Climes! where Joy unmingled flows;
Ne'er taſted on this bleak, inclement Shore.

XXIV.

What's worldly HAPPINESS?—'tis tranſient, vain,
And meteor-like ſhines haſt'ning to its End;
Deluded They! who think it can remain,
Or on the viſionary GOOD depend:

XXV.

For ſoon the Clouds of DISAPPOINTMENT hide
The Sky that ſmiles with HOPE's fallacious Ray,
That on gay PLEASURE's ſmoothly-flowing Tide
Reflects the Beauties of a flatt'ring Day.

XXVI.

Amid the Dangers of LIFE's ſtormy Main
My little Bark ſhall ne'er advent'rous ſail;
Tho' WEALTH ſhou'd tempt me to her rich Domain,
Tho' fair SUCCESS ſhou'd waft the proſp'rous Gale.

XXVII.

Yon HERMIT's Cell; round whoſe rude Arch extends
The moſſy Cov'ring NATURE's Hand has ſpread,
High o'er whoſe Top yon rifted Oak ſtill bends,
And boaſtful waves its tempeſt-beaten Head;

XXVIII.

I viſit oft——The REV'REND FATHER tries
With PITY's Balm to mitigate my Grief,
To wipe the Tear of ANGUISH from mine Eyes,
And yield to MISERY the kind Relief.

XXIX.

There as I liſten to th' inſtructive Lore,
And drink his moral Precept; ſtrait I find
Celeſtial COMFORT pour her lenient Store,
And ſweet COMPOSURE dawn upon my Mind.

XXX.

Sometimes he'll ſay, while down his aged Face
In manly Sorrow ſtreams the frequent Tear;
" Like thee I mourn'd, when from my warm Embrace
" Relentleſs DEATH ſnatch'd all my Soul held dear.

XXXI.

" Now twenty Suns their annual Courſe have gone;
" Since to this ſolitary Cave I fled
" To ſhun ungrateful MAN, and weep alone
" CONNUBIAL TENDERNESS for ever dead.

XXXII.

" I once in VALOUR's Field was much renown'd,
" CONQUEST attended ev'ry martial Toil;
" LOVE once with flow'ry Wreaths my Temples bound;
" And once I baſk'd in FORTUNE's ſunny Smile:

XXXIII.

XXXIII.

" Sudden alas! the Frowns of adverſe FATE
" Each HOPE that roſe on LIFE's gay Scene ſuppreſt:
" Urg'd by DESPAIR, I ſought this lone Retreat;
" Where calm PHILOSOPHY's my ſoothing Gueſt.

XXXIV.

" Court then PHILOSOPHY — 'tis Hers t'aſſuage
" Thoſe Pangs that now deprive thy Breaſt of Eaſe;
" 'Tis Hers to chear the Gloom of ſorrowing AGE,
" And give CONTENTMENT to thy future Days."

FINIS.